

second method allows the landowner to enter into a 10 year restoration cost-share agreement with NRCS providing technical and financial assistance for the restoration of the wetland on their property.

### **Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)**

WHIP provides landowners both technical and financial assistance for the restoration, creation and enhancement of wildlife habitats. Landowners who want to implement a wildlife habitat plan on their land can get up to 75 percent cost-share assistance to establish practices. NRCS and the participant generally enter into contracts that can last from 5 to 20 years from the date the agreement is signed.

### **Watershed Protection, Watershed Surveys, and Flood Prevention**

This program provides for the development of watershed wide surveys and resource management plans. Types of surveys and plans include watershed plans, river basin surveys and studies, flood hazard analyses, and flood plain management studies. A locally led program - project sponsors are provided assistance in installing land treatment measures when plans are approved. Surveys and investigations are made and detailed designs, specifications, and engineering cost-estimates are prepared for construction of structural measures. Technical assistance is also furnished to landowners and operators to accelerate planning and application of needed conservation measures. Rhode Island is presently working on the Pocasset River Flood Plain Study.

### ***OTHER CONSERVATION PROGRAMS***

- Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP)
- Grazing Land Conservation Initiative (GLCI)
- Resource Conservation and Development Program (RC&D)
- Soil Survey Programs

If you would like more information on our conservation programs, please call 401-828-1300 or go to our new updated website at [www.ri.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ri.nrcs.usda.gov)

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United States Department of Agriculture

## **Natural Resources Conservation Service**



*Providing  
Conservation  
on the Land*

# ***WORKING FOR PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND RESOURCES***

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is the lead conservation agency for the United States Department of Agriculture. NRCS conservationists work with private landowners and provide them with technical and financial assistance to sustain and improve the natural resources in Rhode Island. NRCS emphasizes voluntary science-based, technical assistance partnerships; incentive-based programs; and cooperative problem solving at the community level. Cost shares and financial incentives are available in some cases. One-on-one planning assistance is provided to landowners, managers, and community governments in support of their efforts to apply conservation measures on the land. Participation in our programs is voluntary.

## **Conservation Programs**

### **Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)**

The AMA program is designed to help producers reduce their risks, whether it is from natural causes, such as drought, flooding, or wildlife predation on crops or from economic hardship associated with transitioning to organic production or diversifying their operation. In Rhode Island, producers may receive 75% cost share to install new or improved sources of water for irrigation, new irrigation systems, fencing of high value crops to prevent deer predation, cover crops to build soil organic matter if transitioning to organic, and other conservation practices as needed.

### **Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA)**

The CTA program provides conservation technical assistance to help landowners and others develop conservation plans. No application is required to get assistance through CTA. This program provides base funding to NRCS to sustain our technical services to all land users in Rhode Island, regardless of eligibility for other financial programs. This assistance is for planning and implementing conservation practices that address natural resource issues. It helps people voluntarily conserve, improve and sustain natural resources.

### **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**

EQIP is the primary source of cost-share assistance available to farmers in Rhode Island to help improve natural resource conditions on their farm. The purpose of EQIP is to promote environmental quality and agricultural production as compatible goals. EQIP offers a variable rate of cost share for on-farm improvements ranging from erosion control to improved manure management facilities. EQIP can help pay for improved grazing systems, such as fence and alternative water supplies needed to minimize or avoid livestock access to wet areas. EQIP can help pay to improve existing irrigation systems if it results in water conservation. EQIP can pay annual incentive payments to help producers improve nutrient, pest and irrigation water management. Eligible producers may receive as much as a 90% cost share reimbursement for most conservation practice needed to improve their resource conditions.

### **Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)**

FRPP provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farms in agricultural use. Working through existing farmland protection programs, USDA partners with State, Tribal, or local governments and non-governmental organizations to acquire conservation easements from private landowners. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value.

### **Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)**

GRP helps farmers maintain or improve maintenance of their hay and grazing operations through rental agreements or permanent conservation easements. It also provides 75 to 90% cost-share for any conservation practices needed to help restore the long-term viability of that grassland. Producers may opt for a 10, 15, 20 or 30 year rental agreement that pays \$15/acre/year for the life of the agreement; or, they may opt to enter into a 30 year or permanent conservation easement where USDA purchases the development rights and the producer is required to maintain the area in grassland.

### **Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)**

The purpose of the WRP is to protect, restore and enhance the function and values of wetland ecosystems to attain habitat for migratory birds and wetland dependent wildlife. The program is mainly used on agricultural land but has been used to restore coastal wetlands in Rhode Island. WRP uses two methods to accomplish its goals of habitat restoration. The first, NRCS will purchase conservation easements from willing landowners on lands that have the potential for restoration. Once the easement is purchased NRCS will develop and implement a restoration plan. The